

Understanding & Communicating with a Multigenerational Workforce



Multigenerational?

- Your Generation
 - Name
 - How defined
 - Perception



Objectives

- Learn about the generations at work today
- Understand the formative events for each generation
- Examine stereotypes that may exist in the workplace
- Determine the most effective approaches for communication with different generations
- Custom fit your communication style to meet the challenges of generational differences

Four Generations

- **Traditionalists**

- Born between 1925-1942

- **Baby Boomers**

- Born between 1943-1960

- **GenXers**

- Born between 1961-1981

- **Millennials**

- Born between 1982-2002

Formative Events - Traditionalists

- The Great Depression
- WWII
- The New Deal
- Rise of Labor Unions



Values - Traditionalist

- Duty, honor, dedication, sacrifice
- Conformity, Unity
- Hard times, then prosperity
- Patience
- Importance of a job well done
- Respect for authority
- Follows the rules
- Age = Seniority
- Stability



Stereotypes - Traditionalists

- Old-fashioned
- Behind the times
- Rigid/Autocratic
- Change/Risk averse



Formative Events – Baby Boomers

- The Cold War
- Kennedy Assassination
- Civil Rights Movement
- Vietnam War
- Woodstock



Values – Baby Boomers

- Workaholic
- Competitive
- Balancing family and work
- Desire for respect
- Success is visible (material)
- Personal development
- Optimistic



Stereotypes - Boomers

- Self-centered
- Unrealistic
- Political
- Power-driven; workaholic



Formative Events – GenXer

- Fall of the Berlin Wall
- Challenger explosion
- PC boom
- Latchkey Kids
- MTV
- AIDS



Values – GenXers

- Independent
- Cynical and pessimistic
- Think globally
- Technologically literate
- Informality



Stereotypes - GenXers

- Slackers
- Selfish
- Impatient
- Cynical



Formative Events - Millennials

- Oklahoma City Bombing
- 9/11
- Columbine High School
- The Internet
- Technology



Values - Millennials

- Optimistic and Confident
- Individualistic, yet group oriented
- Ambitious, yet aimless
- Diversity
- Easily bored
- Live on technology



Stereotypes - Millennials

- Short attention span
- Spoiled
- Disrespectful
- Technologically dependent



Traditionalists at Work

On the Job

- Assets
- Liabilities

Messages that Motivate

- Your experience is respected here.
- It's valuable to us to hear what has and hasn't worked in the past
- Your sense of urgency is valued, and will be rewarded



Boomers at Work

On the Job

- Assets
- Liabilities

Messages that Motivate

- You are important to our success
- We need you
- Your contribution is unique and important



GenXer at Work

On the Job

- Assets
- Liabilities

Messages that Motivate

- We've got the best and newest hardware/software
- There aren't a lot of rules around here
- We're not "corporate"



Millennials at Work

On the Job

- Assets
- Liabilities

Messages that Motivate

- You'll be working with our best and brightest
- Your boss is in his/her sixties
- You and your coworkers can help turn this company around
- You can be a hero here



Comparing the Generations

	Traditionalists	Boomers	GenXers	Millennials
Defining idea...	Duty	Individuality	Diversity	Optimism
Success because...	Fought hard and won	Born and should have it	Have two jobs	Tenacity
Balance	Flexible hours	Workaholic	Balance is important; willing to sacrifice it occasionally	Lifestyle vs. promotion
Leisure is...	Reward for hard work	The point of life	Relief	Part of life

The Way they See the World

	Traditionalists	Boomers	GenXers	Millennials
Outlook	Practical	Optimistic	Skeptical	Hopeful
Work Ethic	Dedicated	Driven	Balanced	Determined
Respect for Authority	Seniority and Tenure	Similar to Traditionalists; they've earned it	Authority figures are to be tested and viewed with skepticism	Test it out, search for the right one
Leadership by	Hierarchy	Consensus	Competence	Pulling together
Relationships	Personal sacrifice	Personal gratification	Reluctance to commit	Inclusive
Turnoffs	Vulgarity	Political incorrectness	Cliché, hype	Intolerance

Communicating Across Generations

- Avoid stereotyping and any accompanying unconscious biases
- Be trustworthy, be trusting
- Keep communication *open* and *inclusive*
- Get a mentor
- Maintain respect for all generations



One Last Tip

- Recognizing and Appreciating Differences



In Closing...

- Learn about one generation (different from your own)
- Find a mentor
- Appreciate the differences
- Value the individual
- Trust and be trusted
- Respect



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